

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT STAFF

Dr. Elizabeth Chronister, Director of Education



Elizabeth Chronister grew up in Washington State in a wonderful family consisting of five sisters, a brother and parents who have been married for almost fifty years.

As an academically motivated individual, she attended Washington State University, Heritage College, California State University and La Sierra University. In 1994, Mrs. Chronister moved to California to pursue her second master's degree and has since made this great state her home.

With a bachelors degree in Bilingual Education, two masters degrees (one in Professional Development and one in Administration), and a doctorate degree in Leadership and Administration, she enthusiastically welcomes the new challenges that await her.

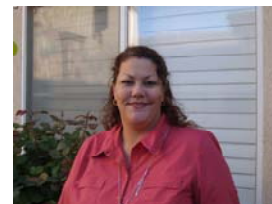
Mrs. Chronister's experience is vast in the area of education; she has been an elementary teacher, a high school teacher, a Reading Recovery teacher leader, a literacy trainer, a consultant, a program specialist and a school administrator.

For the last 10 years, she has served as a consultant to CSUSB, program specialist, vice principal and principal at Rialto and Yucaipa USD. Elizabeth is appreciative of all the knowledge and experience she gained during her tenure at the local school system.

Elizabeth has been happily married to her husband, Dale, for fourteen years and lives in Redlands, California.

Michelle King, Office Manager

Michelle has been working in the education department for the past year. Prior to coming to SMBMI, she spent 9 years working for Rialto Unified School District where she worked in the special education department.



Michelle has a bachelor's degree in Political Science with a minor in Public Administration. Currently, she is enrolled at California State University, San Bernardino in the Masters of Public Administration (MPA) program. She is scheduled to graduate in June 2009. After completing her master's degree, Michelle plans to pursue a doctoral degree in Ethnic Studies.

Michelle has been married to her high school sweetheart, John, for nearly 20 years. Together, they have three children, John, Nina, and Paul.

Blake Cotton, Staff Linguist



Blake has been with the Serrano Language Revitalization Project for four and a half years. He is a Staff linguist for the Tribe and his duties include: assisting the Linguist Consultant in documenting the Serrano Language, recording sessions with their language teacher, editing and archiving new and old audio recordings, making video lessons, writing and teaching Serrano Language lessons, and giving individual Serrano tutoring to Tribe members and education department staff.

Blake is currently studying studio engineering and finishing his degree in linguistics. He hopes to one day be a speech therapist in addition to a linguist.

Blake is a Dodgers fan, likes zombie movies, Batman, reading lots of books, playing various instruments

and he used to lead a rock band. He once coached a coach-pitch league baseball team that his brothers played on.

Marcus Smith, Consultant Linguist

Marcus has been working on the Serrano Language Revitalization Project for three years as a linguist consultant. He is working towards his Ph.D. in Linguistics from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), where he has focused on documenting Native American languages of the southwestern United States. When he is not working on Serrano, he is writing his dissertation or taking photographs of the Los Angeles area.

The main goal of Marcus' work is to document the words and grammar of the Serrano language. He works with current speakers of the language and recordings of those who have passed on to create a dictionary and grammar textbook. He also aids in teaching language lessons to tribe members. He hopes to be able to publish dual language books of traditional Serrano stories in the near future.



Alycia Smith, Tutor

Alycia has been working with SMBMI for about a year and a half. In her current position as a tutor, she works with students during tutoring hours with a specialty in mathematics. The tutors are currently planning a Halloween Carnival, brainstorming for Summer Academy 2009, and developing incentive programs for students who attend the tutoring program.



Alycia is currently attending the University of Redlands and will be graduating in May 2009 with a BS in Mathematics. As a student of the U of R, she is a member of the Proudian Interdisciplinary Honors Program, Maroon and Grey Student Ambassadors, Mortar Board National Honor Society, and WRW, a community service and equality based sisterhood. Her hobbies include being involved in these organizations, as well as completing community service, and spending time with her family. Alycia has recently spent time studying abroad, which includes: three weeks in Japan, three weeks in England, and four month in Barcelona, Spain, which has sparked a new hobby of traveling.

Elizabeth Brierty, Tutor

Elizabeth has been employed with SMBMI for over five (5) years, during which time she took a year off to teach in a local private school.

Elizabeth has earned a BA in Business Administration from California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB). She is planning to return to CSUSB to earn a MBA degree as well as a teaching credential.



Elizabeth states that "tutoring has provided the Tribal students with a place to come and not only get homework help, but also improve their skills in other areas. Tutoring is very diverse in what we offer and students can come in with anything they need help with. Our programs are a mix of their cultural background and educational information. We are currently adding more programs, which will build upon what the students are currently working on and motivate them to further their education."

Annalisa Zavala, Tutor

Growing up in a middle class working family of five children, Annalisa was



determined to go to college and graduate. After having a child of her own, four years later her dreams became a reality. She graduated from Cal State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) with a BA and a teaching credential in Liberal Studies. Shortly after graduating, Annalisa was hired by Rialto Unified School District, where she is still teaching. She has taught in grades K—2nd grade. As an educator, Annalisa finds the opportunity to teach and learn in every experience, in and out of the classroom. Annalisa has two goals for herself at this point. A short term goal is to continue her education and earn a masters degree in administration. A long term goal includes her plan on giving back to society what has been given to her and empowering every student that she comes in to contact with. Annalisa wants every student to believe in themselves and set a pathway for their futures, now.

Damon Coleman, Tutor



Damon began working for the education department recently. He states that in the short time he has worked with the San Manuel Community, he has experienced a culture of acceptance, friendship and respect. He has felt welcomed by students, parents, and staff members alike.

Damon has been married to his “better half” for seven (7 years). He has three daughters who teach him new things all the time. Damon has graduated from California State University, San Bernardino with a bachelor’s degree in Liberal Studies, a master’s degree in Education, and finally a credential as an Education Specialist. His hobbies include fishing, reading, talking with friends, traveling with family, and learning new things.

The important thing is not so much that every child should be taught, as that every child should be given the wish to learn. ~John Lubbock

Lorena Salto, Tutor

Lorena grew up in Orange County, where she completed her elementary and high school education. Lorena graduated with a B.S. in Biomedical Biology from La Sierra University in Riverside. She is currently completing the culminating research requirement for her Master’s in Public Health from Loma Linda University. Lorena is passionate about serving the underserved in any medical or educational capacity.



Lorena enjoys working with children and teenagers of all ages. She has taught fourth grade and enjoys tutoring any science subject. In her free time, Lorena likes to travel and spend time with her family and friends.

Tuquilla Mullins, Tutor

Tuquilla has taught in both the private school and public school settings as both an elementary and middle school teacher. She has over 12 years experience as a teacher. Tuquilla has also supervised after-school programs and extra curricular activities. When she is not teaching, Mrs. Mullins enjoys camping, bowling, quilting, crocheting, and arts and craft activities.

Tuquilla states, “The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians education department offers tutors with a wide variety of teaching skills. The tutors are friendly and very patient with their students. The students seem eager to learn and all have a positive attitude toward being successful learners.”



Denicio Lopez, Tutor



Denicio is a lifelong resident of the San Bernardino/ Highland area. He graduated in 1991 from San Geronio High School, after which he went on to California State University, San Bernardino to earn three degrees in Education: 1999 B.A. in History, 2004 M.A. in Special Education Mild/ Moderate, and finally 2007 M.A. in education administration.

Denicio has worked as a teacher in the San Bernardino City Unified School District for the past 10 years. He has extensive experience working with many students with varying disabilities such as muscular dystrophy, ADHD, Visual and auditory processing issues, and students who are categorized as emotionally disturbed. Outside of the classroom, Denicio has worked with hundreds of students in small group tutoring situations including a 2 year stint with Sylvan Learning Center in Rialto and a four year tour with Home and Hospital with San Bernardino City Schools.

Denicio met his beautiful wife during his freshman year of college, but waited 8 years to finally get married. They recently celebrated their 7th wedding anniversary. Together they have a set of twin daughters that are currently eleventh graders at Cajon High school, and an eight year old son who is a third grader at Manuel Salinas Elementary.

Denicio states, "I am privileged, and honored that you are entrusting me with your precious children and my hope is to help each one reach their academic potential and become lifelong learners."